

HAZARD ALERT

Preventing slips, trips, and falls isn't so hard if you know what to look for. Report any hazards you see in your facility.

To prevent slips, watch out for:

- Oil, grease, or wet spots on the floor
- Smooth, slippery floor surfaces
- Changes from a dry to a wet floor surface
- Icy spots
- Small objects or food on the floor
- Wearing the wrong kind of shoes

To prevent trips, watch out for:

- Cartons, crates, and other obstacles
- Tools and equipment
- Scrap and other materials
- Cords and cables
- Open desk or file drawers
- Objects sticking out into walkways
- Stairs or other floor level changes
- Loose flooring or carpets
- Burned out lights
- Uneven elevator to floor levels
- Carrying items you can't see over
- Not paying attention to where you're going
- Untied shoelaces
- Pants legs or skirts that are too long

To prevent falls, watch out for:

- Unsafe, unstable, or unsecured ladders
- Using boxes, chairs, etc. to reach objects
- Jumping down from trucks, docks, etc.
- Tipping back in your chair
- Going up or down stairs too fast or without holding on to the railing

To reduce the chance of injury if you do start to slip or trip or fall:

- Tuck your chin to protect your head.
- Put your arms out with wrists and elbows bent to break the fall.
- Roll with the fall, keeping your body as relaxed as possible.

SafetyWorks

Marine Operations Center

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Upright and All Right Preventing slips, trips, and falls at work

Statistics show that 15 percent of disabling workplace injuries are the result of slips, trips, and falls. That percentage works out to over 1,500 injuries a day. And those are just the really bad injuries. Many more workers suffer less serious damage, but still have to put up with plenty of pain and discomfort after a fall.

The Mechanics of Slips, Trips, and Falls

Slips are the result of insufficient traction between the sole of your shoe and the surface you are walking on. One minute you're walking along, the next, your foot goes out from under you, and down you go.

Trips occur when your foot or leg bumps into an object on the ground. You lose your balance, and if you can't grab onto something to steady yourself, you fall.

The majority of workplace injuries result from slips and trips. Falls from heights account for fewer accidents but more serious injuries. In fact, it's likely that as many as 5,000 workers nationwide will die from falls this year. Falls from heights happen when you are working above ground level, lose your balance, and crash to the ground.

Any of these accidents can cause strains, sprains, bruises, back injuries, broken bones, or head trauma. Slips, trips, and falls are serious, dangerous, and all-too-common workplace hazards.

How to Prevent Slips, Trips, and Falls

Fortunately, there are two simple things you can do to protect yourself:

#1—Practice safe housekeeping. Remove boxes, carts, and other obstacles from walkways; clean up spills right away; sweep up scrap and debris; pick up tools and other materials from the floor; close drawers when not in use; and don't lay cords and cables across walkways.

#2—Practice safe work habits. Wear sturdy shoes with nonskid soles; walk, don't run—and watch where you're going; be extra careful when working above ground level or when using stairs; and don't jump from heights.



"Well, Jack, I warned you to watch your step. Oh great, here comes Jill, tumbling after..."



Forklift vs. Pedestrians

How can they share the workspace safely?

Whenever forklifts operate around other workers, they present a safety hazard. Accidents can easily occur if forklift operators or pedestrians fail to stay alert and to take proper precautions. To prevent accidents, everybody needs to...

☛ **Be Alert**

- Know what people, vehicles, and activities are around you.
- Make sure others are aware of your presence and movements.

☛ **Follow Sensible Safety Practices**

- Operate a forklift only if you're specially trained and authorized.
- Make sure forklift loads are within the vehicle's capacity.
- Don't fool around on or around forklifts.
- Don't take or permit unauthorized rides on forklifts, including the forks.
- Don't smoke in a forklift refueling or battery charging area.

☛ **Obey Traffic Rules**

- *Forklift operators:*
 - Obey speed limits.
 - Use horns or other signals to let people know where you are.
 - Yield right of way to pedestrians.
- *Pedestrians:*
 - Stay in pedestrian walkways whenever possible.
 - Look both ways before crossing aisles.
 - Obey traffic signs and heed forklift horns or other warning signals.

news & notes

STUDY SAYS WOMEN MORE PRONE TO ERGONOMIC PROBLEMS

Women are at least twice as likely as men to develop some musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) of the upper body, according to a team of Ohio State University scientists, who re-analyzed data from 56 previous studies on the subject.

Until now, some researchers suspected that women appear to have a higher incidence of MSDs because they are more likely than men to seek treatment. Others believed the gender difference was the result of women's greater exposure to certain risk factors.

Conventional wisdom has held that men do physically demanding work, such as heavy lifting, that makes them more susceptible to back problems, while women do the fine, repetitive work that can lead to neck, shoulder, and wrist problems.

But this study showed that women were 2 to 11 times more likely than men to develop MSDs even when both have the same job.

Researchers remain unsure about the reasons for the higher incidence in women, but believe it could be a combination of biomechanical, physiological, psychological, and other factors.

- Q.** What's the most common injury suffered by people who handle materials on the job?
- A.** The most common is back injury due to improper lifting. However, material handlers also suffer cuts and scrapes, broken bones, and head trauma, to name just a few other common injuries.

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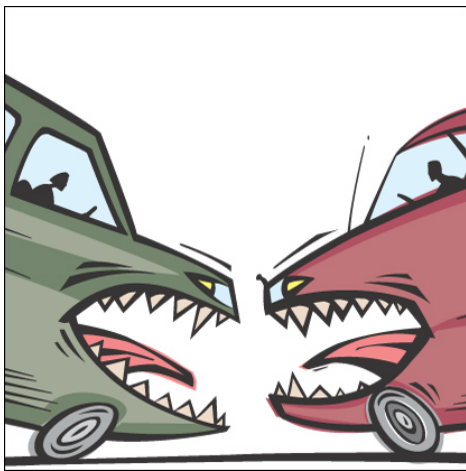
At Risk?

Test your knowledge of chemical exposures

Working with or around hazardous chemicals safely depends on how much you know about the risks of exposure. Test your knowledge by taking this quiz:

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|--|-------------|--------------|
| 1. To learn about chemical hazards, check with a more experienced co-worker. | True | False |
| 2. If a substance is hazardous when inhaled, you can prevent exposure by wearing a face shield. | True | False |
| 3. After you remove PPE contaminated with chemicals, leave it out to dry so you can use it again the next day. | True | False |
| 4. If a hazardous substance splashes in your face, use a clean rag to wipe your face and eyes. | True | False |
| 5. Food, drinks, cosmetics, and street clothes should be kept out of areas where hazardous chemicals are used. | True | False |
| 6. It is not essential to wear PPE if you're cleaning up a very small chemical spill. | True | False |

Answers: (1) False. Read the container label or MSDS, or ask your supervisor. (2) False. You need to wear a respirator. (3) False. Place it in the proper container for disposal or cleaning. Avoid touching it with your bare hands—remove gloves last. (4) False. Flush skin and eyes with water for at least 15 minutes and then get medical attention. (5) True. (6) False. Always wear PPE whenever there is any risk of chemical exposure, no matter how small.



Keep Cool at the Wheel

Aggressive behavior can lead to accidents

“That guy cut me off. I’ll show him!”

Sound familiar? It’s natural to get annoyed on the road, especially when traffic is heavy. There are many drivers who block travel lanes, steal parking spaces, or do worse, downright dangerous actions, such as driving too fast, cutting you off, running stop signs or lights, or tailgating. Some drivers don’t use turn signals or forget to turn them off, so you can’t tell what they’re planning to do.

When confronted with rude and reckless drivers, the temptation is to pay them back. Psychologists say it’s easier to be aggressive toward strangers, especially when we feel they have wronged us. Unfortunately, payback time could easily become accident time. Instead of getting even, get smart and:

- ☺ Drive courteously and defensively.
- ☺ Be prepared for anything.
- ☺ Don’t respond to rude or aggressive behavior.
- ☺ Go with the flow of the traffic.
- ☺ If a vehicle cuts you off, drop back and let it go ahead.

Keep your cool behind the wheel and drive as though your life depends on it—because it does!

news & notes

LET VOICE MAIL TAKE THE CALL

In a recent lawsuit a woman who accidentally struck and killed a teenager while driving and talking on a cell phone was forced by a Virginia jury to pay \$2 million to the child’s family. Of course, no amount of money can restore a life. But the case is a wakeup call to all of us who talk on the phone while we drive.

If you’ve ever been distracted by a phone call and had a near miss while driving, you know that someday you might not be so lucky. It could be you in court. That’s why smart drivers today are letting voicemail systems take incoming calls and only retrieving and responding to calls once they are safely parked.

HEY GUYS, WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU SAW YOUR DOCTOR?

Late diagnosis of chronic conditions and disease can be a problem for men who are known to seek health care less often, and usually at more advanced stages of disease, than women. Workplace disability expert Dr. Ronald Leopold of Met Life Disability points to statistics showing that the incidence of long-term disability among men age 58 and older is a third higher than it is for women of the same age. Dr. Leopold says that’s because many men never see a doctor until they’re already sick.

The message is clear: Men of all ages need to pay more attention to their health and get routine physical examinations to catch health problems early while they are most treatable.

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Danger! Oversized Load

Take these easy precautions and prevent injuries

When you’re faced with transporting a big, bulky load, make the safe choice:

- **Size up the load.** Before you try to lift it, make sure it’s not too heavy. Straining to lift a load that’s too heavy is asking for a back injury. Also, make sure that you can get a good grasp on the load. If it’s too bulky or an awkward shape, you’re likely to drop it before you reach your destination. And make sure you’ll be able to see clearly over the load as you carry it.
- **Get help, if necessary.** When a load is too heavy or bulky to carry alone, ask for help. Straining to handle an unmanageable load can cause back strain or other injuries. Be sure to plan out your moves so that you lift and unload at the same time.
- **Divide the load, if possible.** If you can’t get help, try to divide the load into smaller, more manageable parts. Then make several trips.
- **Use a handcart.** If it’s not possible to divide the load, use a hand cart to help you move it. Place heavy objects on the bottom, with load over axles. Stack lighter objects on top, but don’t block your view. With the help of this kind of equipment, you can move large, bulky loads safely and efficiently.



news & notes

TAKE HEART

February is American Heart Month. Millions of Americans are at risk of heart disease, though they may not have any symptoms. The American Heart Association identifies these risk factors:

- ☒ Smoking
- ☒ High cholesterol
- ☒ High blood pressure
- ☒ Unhealthy diet
- ☒ Lack of exercise
- ☒ Excess weight
- ☒ Stress

Lower your risk for heart attack by taking action if any of these factors apply to you.

- ♥ Manage high blood pressure and high cholesterol levels with proper diet and exercise and medication.
- ♥ Eat a healthy diet with more fruits and vegetables and fewer fats and sweets. Engage in daily exercise that you enjoy so you keep it up.
- ♥ Learn stress management techniques.
- ♥ Quit smoking now!

8 VERY IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

Make sure you know the answers:

1. What hazards should I watch out for?
2. What are my safety responsibilities?
3. Where do I get help with a safety issue?
4. Who do I tell if I spot a safety hazard?
5. How do I report an accident on the job?
6. What do I do in a fire or emergency?
7. Which type of PPE do I need for each job I do?
8. Whom do I tell my suggestions to about improving workplace safety?

A Secure Workplace

Test your knowledge of security issues

Read each statement below. Then circle T for True or F for False:

1. If a non-employee tries to enter the workplace with you, escort the person to the main desk or security checkpoint. T F
2. It's all right to prop a security door open for a minute while you run out to get something from your car. T F
3. If you see a stranger in an area of the facility normally reserved for employees, assume they must have a reason for being there. T F
4. To discourage theft keep personal belongings locked in a desk or locker. T F
5. When working late, let someone know where you are, stay near a phone, and call someone to say when you're leaving. T F
6. If you are accosted by a person with a weapon, stand up to the person and show you're not afraid. T F

Answers: (1) True. (2) False. Never leave a security door open—even for a minute. It only takes a second for someone to enter. (3) False. Always report unauthorized individuals you see in areas of the facility where they don't belong. (4) True. (5) True. (6) False. Remain calm, do as the person says, refrain from challenging the person, and try to escape or summon help if you get a chance.

Don't Fall for Hazards!

Take steps to prevent slips, trips, and falls

There's a way to prevent every slip, trip, or fall.

The Slip: Linda was running to a meeting in spike heels when she slipped on a highly polished floor, twisting her ankle as she fell.

Prevention Tip: Walk, don't run. Be especially careful on highly polished floors. Walk slowly with your toes pointed out. Be careful when choosing work footwear. Spike heels are not a good choice in most cases.

The Trip: Larry was carrying a pile of boxes so high he couldn't see where he was going, so he failed to notice a change in floor level. He went down face first, breaking his nose.

Prevention Tip: Never carry a load that's so high you can't see over it.

The Fall: Joe was painting in a stairwell when his ladder went out from under him. He fell, breaking his leg in two places and suffering a serious concussion. It turned out he'd placed the base of the ladder on a narrow stair tread, and as he worked, one foot of the ladder inched to the edge of the tread and eventually went over.

Prevention Tip: Place ladders on a level, stable surface and secure them carefully before you climb. When there is any danger of the base shifting, have a co-worker hold the ladder steady.